

**Testimony in support of Senate Joint Resolution 17**  
**From Jane Heath, 7185 Gunn Road, Helena**  
**February 5, 2009**

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee and Senator Perry, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of SJ 17.

My name is Jane Heath. I have lived in Helena for 21 years and grew up in Billings. I grew up in town but was fortunate enough to have my own horse which I boarded at a variety of facilities in and near Billings while I grew up. I've continued to have horses throughout my adult life and have lived in six different Montana locations. From childhood onward I have had the luxury of riding my horses in and around the various Montana towns where I have lived. Car drivers, bicyclists, pedestrians and ATV users have always been polite and respectful of me on horseback whether I've met them along a road or on public lands.

I realize I am so fortunate to live in a state where horseback riders are treated so politely and respectfully.

A few years ago I attended the American Endurance Riders Conference in Reno. A major topic of the conference was rider access and easements. Riders from all over the country were complaining about the decrease in areas where they could ride safely if at all. I suddenly realized what a precious part of living in Montana horse access is.

Not only are horses a key component of Montana's history, they are a vital part of our culture today. Horseback riding is part of what makes our state so special. I realize that Montana is changing rapidly and it's not always positive change. Keeping horses part of our daily culture and allowing riders access and transportation routes is integral to keeping Montana Montana.

I urge you to give a do-pass to SJ 17. Thank you.